

Message Text

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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 03555

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TAGS: OCON, GAO, AORG
SUBJECT: VISIT OF RALPH NILSSON AND CARL LEWIS:
GAO STUDY OF UNESCO

REF: STATE 218955 (USUN 22660)

1. SUBJECT GAO AUDITORS MET, DURING SEPTEMBER 5 AND 6, WITH USUN OFFICERS; LANDELIUS, CHIEF OF UNESCO LIAISON OFFICE; LISTER, SECRETARY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON CO-ORDINATION; AND STANDKE, DIRECTOR OF OFFICE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO CONTINUE STUDY, WHICH BEGAN IN PARIS, OF UNESCO ACTIVITIES INCLUDING U.S. PARTICIPATION. BEFORE THEIR MEETINGS WITH UN OFFICIALS GAO TEAM WAS BRIEFED BY USUN OFFICER ON UN SECRETARIAT AND RELATED AGENCIES INCLUDING QUESTIONS OF CONCERN TO GAO TEAM.

2. IN THE MEETING WITH LANDELIUS NILSSON EXPLAINED IN GENERAL TERMS GAO RELATIONSHIP TO THE U.S. CONGRESS AND ITS INTEREST IN UN PROGRAMS, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF SPECIALIZED AGENCIES BUT THE CURRENT STUDY WAS LIMITED TO UNESCO. GAO TEAM HAD SPENT ONE MONTH IN PARIS STUDYING UNESCO AND HAD BEEN IMPRESSED WITH UNESCO INITIATIVES ON ITS MEDIUM TERM PLAN WHICH WAS BASED ON GOALS OR OBJECTIVES AND TIED INTO A TIME PHASED FINANCIAL COMMITMENT. NILSSON FELT THAT THE UNCLASSIFIED

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UNESCO TECHNIQUE LESSENS SCATTERATION OF EFFORT AND THEREBY PERMITTED BETTER CONCENTRATION TOWARD REACHING THE DESIRED GOALS/OBJECTIVES.

3. LANDELIUS EXPLAINED THE ROLE OF THE UNESCO LIAISON OFFICE IN NEW YORK BY STATING THAT IT HAD TWO MAIN FUNCTIONS; ONE WAS TO CARRY OUT DAY TO DAY

COORDINATION ACTIVITIES WITH THE UN SECRETARIAT AND OTHER UN AGENCIES REPRESENTED IN NEW YORK, THE OTHER FUNCTION OF THE UNESCO LIAISON OFFICE WAS TO COVER AND/OR REPRESENT UNESCO AT INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETINGS HELD IN NEW YORK. WHEN ASKED WHAT HE DOES WITH OTHER UN AGENCY COMMENTS ON THE UNESCO MEDIUM TERM PLAN AND/OR BUDGET, LANDELIUS STATED THAT HE DID NOT PREPARE A DIGEST OR ANALYSIS OF THESE COMMENTS BUT ONLY SENT THEM TO PARIS. LIKEWISE THE UNESCO COMMENTS ON OTHER AGENCY OR UN SECRETARIAT PLANS AND/OR BUDGETS WERE PREPARED IN PARIS. WHENEVER THE NEW YORK LIAISON OFFICE HAD COMMENTS ON AGENCY PLANS OR BUDGETS THEY WOULD ALSO BE SENT TO PARIS RATHER THAN TO THE AGENCY CONCERNED. THE ROLE OF ACC AND ITS PREPCOMS AS A SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR ACC WAS EXPLAINED AS WAS THE ROLE OF THE UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD. NILSSON SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT IT WAS THE UN POLICY TO HOLD GROWTH RATES, IN ACTUAL TERMS, TO 2 PERCENT OVERALL. LANDELIUS STATED THAT UNESCO WAS NOT OPERATING UNDER THE UN GUIDELINE AND THAT THE UNESCO BUDGET CALLED FOR GROWTH OF ABOUT 6 PERCENT. ACCORDING TO LANDELIUS A UNESCO LIAISON OFFICE IN WASHINGTON IS BEING SET UP TO LIAISON WITH IBRD, IMF AND OTHER WASHINGTON BASED UN ACTIVITIES. HE ADMITTED THAT UNESCO ALSO WISHED TO HAVE "A PERSON ON THE SPOT"

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WITH EASY ACCESS TO THE U.S. CONGRESS. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR UNESCO AND THE N.Y. LIAISON OFFICE WERE CURRENTLY VERY GOOD ACCORDING TO LANDELIUS.

4. IN THE NEXT MEETING WITH LISTER, NILSSON GAVE THE BACKGROUND FOR THE GAO VISIT AND ASKED WHAT WAS BEING DONE IN THE UN THROUGH THE ACC TO MINIMIZE OR ELIMINATE OVERLAPPING AND DUPLICATION OF EFFORTS AMONG UN AGENCIES. WITH RESPECT TO UNESCO, IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT ITS CHARTER WAS VERY BROAD AND, FOR EXAMPLE, IN FIELD OF SCIENCE ALONE THERE ARE A NUMBER OF AGENCIES ENGAGING IN SCIENCE PROGRAMS. LISTER EXPLAINED HOW THE ACC OPERATED-- THAT IT IS HEADED BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL, MADE UP OF EXECUTIVE HEADS OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THAT IT MEETS THREE TIMES A YEAR (IN NEW YORK DURING THE G.A., ONCE IN GENEVA, AND THE THIRD TIME IN EUROPE) TO DISCUSS MAJOR INTER-AGENCY POLICY PROBLEMS. LISTER ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THERE ARE ACC SUB-COMMITTEES FOR A NUMBER OF THE 32 SECTORS COVERED BY THE UN. THE ACC SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SUB-

COMMITTEE MEETS TWICE A YEAR, IS CHAIRED BY MR. STANDKE, AND ITS MEMBERSHIP COMPRISES ALL UN AGENCIES EXCEPT IMF AND UNRWA. THE SUB-COMMITTEE OBJECTIVE IS TO ACHIEVE, ULTIMATELY, JOINT PLANNING OF SCIENCE PROGRAMS AMONG AGENCIES IN THE INTEREST OF BETTER MANAGEMENT AND TO AVOID OVERLAPPING AND DUPLICATION.

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IT WAS ALSO NOTED THAT THE UN CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SECRETARIAT WAS NOT A MEMBER OF THE ACC ST SUB-COMMITTEE BUT HELD ITS OWN COORDINATION MEETINGS. LISTER ALSO VOLUNTEERED THAT THE ACC MACHINERY WAS TO BE REVIEWED NEXT WEEK IN GENEVA WITH A VIEW TO REDUCING THE NUMBER OF MEETINGS BECAUSE OF THEIR HIGH COSTS DUE TO THE GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD OF LOCATIONS, I.E. NEW YORK, GENEVA, ETC. ASKED ABOUT DECISIONS REACHED AT ACC MEETINGS AND HOW THEY ARE CONVEYED TO THE UN AGENCIES AND/OR OFFICES FOR IMPLEMENTATION, LISTER STATED THAT THE ACC DID NOT TAKE FORMAL DECISIONS, AS SUCH, BUT THAT THE RESULTS ACHIEVED AT ITS CLOSED MEETINGS WERE PUBLISHED FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION AND INFORMATION. IN DISCUSSING THE MEDIUM TERM PLAN, LISTER SAID THAT A FOUR YEARS PLANNING PERIOD VERSUS A SIX YEARS PERIOD HAD BEEN CONSIDERED BUT THAT FOUR YEARS HAD BEEN CONSIDERED REASONABLE GIVEN THE FAST CHANGING TIMES. LISTER VOLUNTEERED THAT GREATER UNIFORMITY AND HARMONIZATION OF MEDIUM TERM PLANS, PROGRAMS AND BUDGETS IS NECESSARY AND THAT MANY OF THE PRESENT PLANS ARE ONLY A LISTING OF DESIRED GOALS OR OBJECTIVES WITHOUT ANY REAL PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTATIONS. IN RESPONSE OF THE QUESTION OF UN'S 2 PERCENT GROWTH RATE, LISTER SAID THIS QUESTION WAS NOT DISCUSSED IN ACC AND THAT EACH AGENCY'S GROWTH RATE REFLECTED ITS OWN DECISIONS ON THIS MATTER.

LISTER ALSO EXPLAINED TO THE GAO TEAM THE ROLES OF
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THE AMS AND ACABQ.

5. IN THE MEETING WITH STANDKE, FOLLOWING INTRODUCTORY AND BACKGROUND COMMENTS BY MILSSON, STANDKE WAS ASKED ABOUT POSSIBLE OVERLAPPING AND DUPLICATION OF EFFORTS IN SCIENCE FIELD BY UNESCO VIS-A-VIS THE UN AND OTHER UN AGENCIES. STANDKE FIRST EXPLAINED HIS CONCEPT OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, I.E., PURE SCIENCE INCLUDING RESEARCH AS COMPARED WITH TECHNOLOGY WHICH APPLIES RESULTS DERIVED FROM SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS. STANDKE STATED THAT THE UN OFFICE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TRIED TO EXAMINE THE PROJECTS OF ALL AGENCIES IN ORDER TO ASCERTAIN THE PERCENTAGE OF THE PROJECT WITH SCIENCE ELEMENTS. HE SHOWED THE GAO TEAM A TABLE WITH THE RESULTS OF SUCH A STUDY WHICH INDICATED THAT 15 PERCENT OF UNESCO'S RESOURCES WERE USED ON SCIENCE WHEREAS ALMOST 100 PERCENT OF IAEA RESOURCES WAS ATTRIBUTED TO SCIENCE. HOWEVER, THIS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN TO MEAN THAT IAEA SHOULD TAKE ON ALL SCIENCE PROGRAMS FOR THE UN; THERE IS, PERFORCE A SCIENCE COMPONENT IN MOST PROGRAMS CONDUCTED BY UN AGENCIES, E.G., WHO AND FAO AND OTHERS. WHILE ONE MIGHT CONCLUDE THAT SINCE UNESCO SCIENCE INVOLVEMENT IS MINIMAL AND THEREFORE SHOULD BE DROPPED, ONE MUST ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT UNESCO IS AN AUTONOMOUS AGENCY AND THE UN SECRETARIAT SYSTEM DOES NOT CONTAIN A PROCEDURE WHEREBY ONE AGENCY CAN CHANGE ANOTHER AGENCY'S PROGRAM; RATHER IT IS UP TO THE INTER-GOVERNMENTAL MACHINERY OF THE UN TO BRING ABOUT THE NECESSARY PRESSURE TO MAKE THE DESIRED CHANGES. HOWEVER, STANDKE SPECULATED THAT AS A RESULT OF THE UN CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, IT WAS
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PROBABLE THAT UNESCO COULD LOSE THE "S" IN ITS NAME (SCIENCE) AND BECOME UNECO (UN EDUCATION AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION). STANDKE ALSO COVERED THE POLITICAL IN-FIGHTS WITHIN THE UN FAMILY AND HOW DIFFICULT HE FELT IT WAS TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE. AGAIN HE REITERATED THAT ONLY THE GOVERNMENTS CAN INTRODUCE CHANGE BY VIRTUE OF THEIR "RESOLUTION" POWER.

6. USUN WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING A COPY OF ANY
GAO REPORT ON UNESCO WHEN IT BECOMES AVAILABLE. YOUNG

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